



# Center City *Urban Design Forum 2000*

Part I: A Summary of Principles and Proposed Actions

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### Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

- Mayor Schell
- Councilmembers Conlin, Drago, Licata, Steinbrueck



### Participants

- Urban Design Team
- Presenters
- Forum planning group



On June 1-3, 2000 around 285 participants gathered for the Center City Urban Design Forum at the former US Naval Reserve armory building in South Lake Union to take the next step in developing an urban design strategy for the Downtown Urban Center and its adjacent neighborhoods. **The Forum brought together citizens, developers, property and business owners, city staff and others to listen to diverse perspectives on urban design and to recommend principles and opportunities for action related to both geographical areas and the whole of the Center City.** Forum participants had the opportunity to hear about urban design approaches and experiences of other cities from Bob Kroin (Boston), Ray Gastil, Executive Director of the Van Alen Institute of New York, and Anne Vernez Moudon who provided a perspective on Paris and Japan. Participants also reflected the Center City urban design and planning efforts of the past 15 years while welcoming fresh and dynamic ideas for an urban design strategy. The strategy, entitled *Connections and Places*, will be developed during the coming months, largely guided by the work of the Forum. Our hope is that the Urban Design Strategy will guide public and private investment decisions in the Center City area for the next decade, and start to shape the look and feel of Seattle for the new century.

The Center City Urban Design Forum 2000 report consists of two parts.

*Part I: A Summary of Principles and Proposed Actions* includes the Introduction and three sections. The first section is a brief summary of planning and urban design efforts of the past 15 years that led to *Connections and Places* and the 2000 Center City Urban Design Forum. These efforts include the 1985 Downtown Plan, 1994 Downtown Urban Design Forum, and the 1999 Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan. The second section presents eight themes drawn from the Center City Urban Design Forum presentations and work groups as four Principles and four Opportunities for Action. The third section summarizes comments by the Mayor and four City Council members on outcomes of the Forum work groups.

*Part II: A Summary of Keynote Presentations and Reports* includes summaries of the Mayor's opening comments, keynote presentations, and 39 reports on trends & context, neighborhoods, and challenges and ideas for urban design in the Center City.

*the report provides a synthesis of the Forum outcomes into a concise set of principles and opportunities for actions that will form the basis for Connections and Places.*

## How we got here...

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*Connections and Places: A Center City Urban Design and Implementation Strategy* is intended as a framework for actions and projects related to the physical “public realm” of the Center City. As a first step in developing *Connections and Places*, the Forum was an opportunity to “think outside of the property lines” and look at the connective tissue between development projects, i.e., the streets, open spaces and activities that makes them work as a whole. The challenge of the Forum was to acknowledge the planning efforts of the past 15 years and to take the next steps toward an urban design strategy in making connections and special places within neighborhoods.

### Background

A comprehensive urban design plan for the Downtown Urban Center was a priority recommendation from the 1999 Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan. The Downtown Urban Center Planning Group (DUCPG), a committee of citizens, recognized that urban design is key to their vision and goals for downtown. Upon completion of the neighborhood planning process, DUCPG recommended that the

City allocate its portion of the Early Implementation Fund towards initial development of a downtown urban design plan. The planning committee has since merged with the Downtown District Council (DDC) that now serves as the steward for the Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan's implementation. The DDC advises CityDesign on neighborhood issues related to *Connections and Places* and is helping to organize community involvement for the strategy.

The challenge of the Forum was to acknowledge the planning efforts of the past 15 years and to take the next steps toward an urban design strategy in making connections and special places within neighborhoods.

**The Seattle Design Commission recognized the need for a comprehensive approach to urban design for Seattle's downtown.** In addition to reviewing projects funded by the City of Seattle and/or on City property, the Design Commission has convened forums and workshops related to downtown urban design. Commission members have also participated on task forces and other planning efforts for downtown such as the Civic Center Master Plan and the Pine Street Advisory Task Force. Along

with the Seattle Planning Commission, the Design Commission sponsored the 1994 Downtown Design Forum that involved diverse downtown constituents in creating an urban design framework for downtown development projects, open space, and transportation. The 1994 Forum paid particular attention to urban design in the Retail Core, South Downtown and the Civic Center area. The

## How we got here...

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Design Commission was instrumental in establishing CityDesign in 1999 as a new city office dedicated to urban design leadership, education and stewardship. CityDesign is now the City of Seattle's lead in developing *Connections and Places: A Center City Urban Design and Implementation Strategy* in cooperation with community organizations, government agencies, elected officials, and other Center City constituents.

Planning and setting policy for the future of the Center City is a complex process involving numerous stakeholders over time. Seattle's design community has an important role in guiding the future of the Center City. CityDesign now provides the design community and other citizens a strong voice for urban design quality especially in relation to the public realm. CityDesign, through efforts such as the Center City Urban Design Forum and *Connections and Places*, provides a strong voice for design quality and is committed to working with agency staff, elected officials, and community members to make wise decisions for the public realm of the Center City.

*Connections and Places* builds upon the past 15 years of planning and urban design efforts for downtown Seattle. Some of the key planning efforts that provide a foundation for *Connections and Places* are:

- 1985 Downtown Plan
- 1994 Downtown Design Forum
- 1996 Commercial Core Streetscape Charette
- 1999 Design Review Guidelines for Downtown Development
- 1999 Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan and other neighborhood plans

During the early development of *Connections and Places*, it became apparent that the urban design strategy must not only address the Downtown Urban Center but also the connections with its adjacent neighborhoods. The "Center City" has been proposed as the study area for *Connections and Places* and includes the five Downtown Urban Center neighborhoods of Belltown, Chinatown/International District, Commercial Core, Denny Triangle and Pioneer Square as well as connections with South Lake Union, Uptown, South Downtown, Pike/Pine and First Hill.

# How we got here...

## Gaps and Opportunities Study

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Prior to the Center City Urban Design Forum, 40 plans and studies related to downtown and its adjacent neighborhoods, beginning with the 1985 Downtown Plan, were reviewed and are summarized in the *Center City Mosaic - A Summary of Plans, Gaps, and Outcomes Since 1985*.

The objectives of the study were to:

- Identify urban design elements from neighborhood plans, especially those that may contribute significantly to the larger context of the Center City.
- Review the framework, vision and goals for downtown/ Center City urban design.
- Identify geographic, policy and procedural gaps in urban design.

In addition, around 20 GIS “X-ray maps” were compiled from the City of Seattle’s existing GIS database to support the gaps and opportunities study as well as the overall development of *Connections and Places*.

Information from the *Center City Mosaic* and the X-ray maps have been synthesized on the following maps in order to show spatial relationships between the issues:

- Gap Areas (areas with no plan or vision, areas with plans but no implementation)
- Planned Areas (areas with plans that are likely to be implemented)
- Key Corridors (significant rights of way that need design)

Three previous downtown-wide planning efforts provide a foundation for developing a vision for Center City urban design:

- 1985 Downtown Plan (Framework Policies)
- 1994 Downtown Design Forum (Downtown is... statements, Principles, and Beliefs)
- 1999 Downtown Urban Center Neighborhood Plan (Vision and Goals)

The various neighborhood plans are also important in contributing to a Center City vision. There are common themes among the numerous area-specific visions within the Center City. (See the *Center City Mosaic*)



# How we got here...

## A Center City Urban Design Forum

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The Forum consisted of three activities:

- **Day One** (Thursday): Listening – Presentations by Center City constituents on Trends & Context, Neighborhoods, and Challenges & Ideas.
- **Day Two** (Friday): Working – Urban design charette with Forum participants, including designers, neighborhood representatives, City and other agency staff, developers, small business owners and property owners.
- **Day Three** (Saturday): Presenting – Presentations of work group outcomes to the larger community and comments by the Mayor and members of the City Council.

## Forum Agenda

### **Day One     June 1**

presentations of ideas, context, plans

8:00 – 8:30	Registration/Open House
8:30 – 9:30	Keynote Speaker: Bob Kroin (BRA)
9:30 – 1:00	Presentations: Trends and Context
1:00 – 2:00	Lunch
2:00 – 5:00	Presentations: Neighborhood Plans'
5:00 – 6:00	Closing Remarks: Anne Vernez Moudon (UW)

### **Day Two     June 2**

work sessions for urban design teams

8:00 - 8:30	Keynote Speaker: Ray Gastil (Van Alen Institute)
8:30 – 8:40	Plans, Gaps and Opportunities – CityDesign staff
8:40 – 11:30	Work teams' discussion of questions
11:30 – 12:00	First pin-up session illustrating initial work
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 3:00	Work teams develop recommendations
3:00 – 3:30	Second pin-up session and break
3:30 – 6:30	Work teams develop recommendations and implementation strategies
6:30 – 8:00	Final pin-up and Happy Hour.

### **Day Three     June 3**

public presentations by urban design teams

8:30 – 9:15	Open house to view pin-ups from work teams
9:30 – 11:00	Presentations from each work team
11:00 – 12:00	Response by elected officials
12:00 – 12:30	Facilitated discussion on places and connections
12:30 – 1:00	Next steps, thank you and send-off

## How we got here...

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On Friday, around 150 designers, community members and government agency staff rolled up their sleeves and tackled Center City urban design issues in 10 work groups including six that addressed area-specific design issues and four that addressed City Center-wide and regional urban design. By Friday afternoon an additional work group called “Team 11” was initiated by several participants. Team 11 focused on creating an alternate vision for Center City urban design. The work of all eleven groups have been synthesized into the Principles and Opportunities for Action described below.

Each work group started their work session with a brief discussion to define urban design. The work groups were then asked to establish five principles to guide their recommendations. Keynote speakers and individuals speaking on trends and context, neighborhoods, and challenges and ideas also suggested principles for Center City urban design. Finally, each of the work groups, with some variation, were asked to address the following questions during their session:

**1. Given the “gaps” for this particular area, what public or private actions should take place to address these gaps within the following time frames?**

- Today
- 1 year (from today)
- 3 years
- 10 years?

**2. What other parts of Center City should be strongly connected to this area? How? What public or private actions should be taken during the next ten years to strengthen the connections between this area and other parts of Center City?**

During the course of Friday's charette a mysterious note on a folded 4"x6" card was passed amongst the members in each of the ten work groups. On the cover of the card was written in red ink the request to “pass it on...” On the inside was the following message:

***“Are you restless for change?***

***Defectors, join us!!***

***2:42 behind the black curtain.***

***Rule #1: Do not talk about the revolution.***

***Rule #2: Do not talk about the revolution.***

***Rule #3: Meet us behind the curtain.***

***Griping – No  
Action – Yes”***

The unlikely “Team 11” met twice behind the black curtain and created their “ten minute vision.” To Team 11 it seemed that the seeds of change are trying to sprout through the asphalt of the professional planning process. Team 11 kicked off the work group presentations on Saturday morning with their ten-minute vision.



# 8 Themes

## Four Principles

All of the principles expressed by the speakers and generated by work groups during the Forum suggests the following four key urban design principles:

### **Ensure that the Center City is for Everyone**

- Housing should be for all income levels and lifestyles
- Affordable commercial space
- Tourists will come if we design a beautiful, accessible Center City for Seattle

### **Recognize that the Center City is an Urban Ecosystem (Sustainable Development and Infrastructure)**

- Preserve and enhance diverse and thriving habitats
- Promote design that conserves energy
- Develop innovative approaches to sustainable infrastructure

### **Make Real Places (large and small)**

- Preserve and enhance individual neighborhood character
- Develop places for fun and serendipity
- Preserve our historic urban legacy
- Increase opportunities for public art

### **Implement! Implement! Implement! (Establish Implementation Mechanisms)**

- Think and act across departmental boundaries
- Think and act across governmental boundaries
- Create useful public/private partnerships
- Create meaningful but efficient processes

## 8 Themes

### Four Opportunities for Action: Project Ideas from Work Groups

The project ideas developed by the work groups suggest four Opportunities for Action:

#### Continue to Implement Neighborhood Plans

- Design and implement Green Streets
- Add and improve neighborhood open spaces
- Develop housing for all income levels and lifestyles
- Create pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and the waterfront.
- Modify zoning, and TDR and bonus programs to better support neighborhood housing and open space goals.

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#### Prepare a Center City Open Space Strategy

- Develop an open space network (Where new spaces should go)
- Modify Bonus and TDR provisions to encourage acquisition and development of new open spaces
- Program existing and new open spaces
- Manage key open spaces

#### Develop a new long-term vision for the Waterfront

- Take advantage of upcoming projects/opportunities
- Preserve and enhance diverse and thriving habitats
- Ensure public access, open space, views
- Design to be the best for Seattle, and tourists will come
- Deal with the Viaduct
- Incorporate the diverse needs of industrial, transportation, public access, tourist and residential uses while recognizing the ecological significance of Elliot Bay.

#### Make Connections across Gaps

- Under/over I-5
- Through the Viaduct (connect neighborhoods to water)
- Between Lake Union and Elliott Bay
- Between neighborhoods

# 8 Themes

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- Promote design that conserves energy
- Develop innovative approaches to sustainable infrastructure

### Make Real Places (large and small)

- Preserve and enhance individual neighborhood character
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- Think and act across departmental boundaries
- Think and act across governmental boundaries
- Create useful public/private partnerships
- Create meaningful but efficient processes

Principles generated for each of the geographic areas and the Center City as a whole are included below:

### Uptown/Belltown

Urban Design Principles:

1. Respect Neighborhood Plans.
2. Look at the big picture/connections and gaps.
3. Nature: Increase opportunities to experience nature. Open the city to the water!
4. Mobility: Balance pedestrian access with other transit modes (bus, rail, cars, trolley, bikes, etc.)
5. Housing: Maintain diversity of housing types and affordability.
6. Neighborhood Character: Strengthen identity of individual neighborhoods.

## 8 Themes

### South Lake Union/Denny Triangle

#### GUIDING PRINCIPALS

1. Promote and build on distinct identities and character of each area.
  - a. for South Lake Union – respect and build on what is already there
  - b. for Denny Triangle – create identity and character through new development
  - c. for both – respect diversity
2. Strive for and achieve a diverse mix of uses and income levels
3. While serving as an efficient conduit for commuters & travelers, encourage filtering and permeability (i.e. promote them to visit, shop, site-see, and otherwise enjoy the neighborhood.)
4. **BE BOLD:** Find ways to succeed in all three “Triple Bottom Lines.”
  - a. **Community**
  - b. **Economy**
  - c. **Environment**
5. Realize the vision by following and building upon the neighborhood plan.

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### Waterfront

#### Priority Principles:

- Creativity of Solutions:
  - Policy
  - Vision to guide design
- Balance of:
  - human use and natural function
  - uses
  - users
  - impacts
- Engage all stakeholders and seek consensus of vision.
- Clearly define problems and then find solutions.
- Connect our city to the water. (1)
- Multimodal transportation.
- Preservation of public realm.
- Authenticity of development.

Engage all stakeholders and seek consensus of vision.  
Clearly define problems and then find solutions.

### Pike/Pine Corridor

- Concrete solutions and alternatives
- Human needs represented equitably
- Connect Pike and Pine corridors to Denny Triangle
- Heal the freeway break
- Address barriers (Many themes: topographic, scale of buildings, freeway, etc.)
- Pedestrian supported and prioritized

# 8 Themes

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## Downtown Core

1. More Activity LONGER
  - Diverse/Shared Uses
  - Increased/Diverse Housing (All incomes)
2. Proud Public Amenities
  - Encourage public gathering space
  - Provide public toilets
  - Alluring transportation/transit stops
3. Architecture that is...
  - Inspirational
  - Regional
  - Contextual
  - Cultural
  - Accessible
4. Sustainable Projects
  - Ecologically sound
  - Enhance environment
  - Preservation
5. Leverage public/private investment
  - Accomplish multiply goals
  - Channel economic drivers
  - Respect needs of all

## South Downtown

1. Transportation (vehicular, freight, pedestrian) for circulation in neighborhoods and the region.
2. Preservation and protection of neighborhood character.
3. Enhancement and incorporation of open space/green space/park opportunities. Eco-smart design – roof top garden opportunities.
4. Evaluating cumulative impacts.
5. Celebrating and preserving diversity and authenticity (character).
6. Design needs to be holistic and flexible to address the three neighborhoods' needs.
7. Incorporating a range of housing stock and supportive amenities.
8. Acknowledge parking needs and creative techniques to incorporate parking.

## Open Space

Five Guiding Principles for Open Space:

1. Open Space should be considered as a system
  - Capturing links including sidewalks, right of way, street facilities.
  - Public and private spaces should be included in the system.
  - Existing successful spaces should be maintained.
  - Enhance the underutilized spaces.

## 8 Themes

2. Physical and visual connections are important elements of that system
  - Identify and preserve key visual corridors.
  - Capitalize an opportunity to enhance or define view corridors.
  - Enhance and increase connections to the waterfront.
  - Look at streets as open space opportunities.
3. Open Space should be considered on a macro scale to micro scale
  - Micro spaces: enable the private sector to embellish small spaces.
  - Small spaces: pursue public/private partnerships.
  - Large spaces: public funding. Pass Pro Parks levy
4. Development of each open space should be consistent with neighborhood plans and reflect the character of the area
  - Respect historic context.
  - Respect surrounding scale of development.
  - Acknowledge environmental parameters.
  - Amplify uniqueness of the neighborhood.
  - Respond to social needs of neighbors, accessibility, and also safety issues, i.e. eyes on the street)
5. Build in a sustainability plan to keep the system viable
  - Get creative about joint use when appropriate.
  - Allow open spaces to be adaptable to meet future needs.
  - Nodes/activities.
  - Long term viability of the open space system (tied to the social health of the Center City).

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### Connections/Circulation

1. Every new building in the city of Seattle should have housing in it. The first floor of a building is part of the public realm.
2. The journey is as important as the destination. The path between origin and destination should be one of delight, surprise, and connection.
3. Congestion and messiness along the path are to be promoted.
4. Urban design must be for all modes of movement.

# 8 Themes

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## Synthesis

Act, not talk!

Create a vibrant and cohesive city!

The Synthesis Group focused on what it would take to realize the collective urban design vision (principles) of the other nine work groups. The group addressed the barriers, including Current Urban Myths and Current Personality Traits, to realizing the Center City vision. They then suggested priorities for removing the barriers and articulating the "personality traits" needed for implementing the vision.

Current Urban Myths:

- Density is a problem to be solved (as opposed to an opportunity to be welcomed).
- High density = high crime.
- Seattle's Center City should compete with the suburbs (as opposed to the idea that suburbs should keep up with the Center City).
- Congestion is bad, conflict of uses is bad...conflict is bad.

Current Personality Traits

- Seattle is run by traffic engineering.
- Seattle is developing a corporate face, including short-term, short-sighted approaches.
- No attention paid to "underground" part of city.

Personality Traits needed for the Center City Vision to emerge

- We are preparing for the party that includes new residents, new business forms, density and "congestion".
- We are developing a 24-hour city center.
- We are focusing on neighborhoods or clusters for targeted comprehensive development.
- We are incubating new forms for businesses, residences, or well...new forms.
- We are not focusing on cars.
- We are articulating the private/public zone transition on streets.
- We are enjoying the Seattle squeeze.

## Power of 10

The role of the urban core in relation to the region must be:

To concentrate growth and diversity.

To be a regional model for

- Environmental values
- Social equity
- Sustained political will (this was a major and frequent focus of the group)
- Experimentation and mistakes
- "Enlightened self-interest"



## 8 Themes

### Principles:

Any action should uphold these principles:

- Life-affirming
- Useful
- Lasting
- Beautiful
- Real
- "Power of 10"
- Responsibility

### The Social Contract:

- Support what is working.
- Boldly stop what is not working and let new solutions emerge.
- Commit to diverse and redundant solutions.
- Recognize and accept instability as our natural state.
- Keep moving – don't stop! (Stop! – don't keep moving.)
- Rejoice in our habitation of dynamic and ever-changing systems.

### Environmental Values:

- Meaning...understanding and awareness of the natural systems of the region and applying that understanding to real action(s).

## 8 Themes

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### Four Opportunities for Action: Project Ideas from Work Groups

The project ideas developed by the work groups suggest four Opportunities for Action:

1. **Continue to Implement Neighborhood Plans**
2. **Prepare a Center City Open Space Strategy**
3. **Develop a new long-term vision for the Waterfront**
4. **Make Connections across Gaps**

A synthesis of project ideas are listed under each of the four Opportunities for Action below followed by the specific work group project ideas:

#### 1. **Continue to Implement Neighborhood Plans**

Design and implement Green Streets

Add and improve neighborhood open spaces

Develop housing for all income levels and lifestyles

Create pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and the waterfront.

Modify zoning, and TDR and bonus programs to better support neighborhood housing and open space goals.

#### *Project Ideas from Forum*

##### **Enhance waterfront access:**

- Uptown (West Thomas, Galer, Eagle)
- Belltown (designated Green Streets)
- No Broad Street overpass project
- Place railroad tracks and trains in tunnel below grade (10 years)
- Remove the Viaduct (by March, 2003)

##### **Green Streets/Open Space:**

- Regrade Park: program for safety
- Implement Belltown's Green Streets program
- Build on Public Investment in Belltown's P-patch
- Uptown Green Streets (3 years)
- Build an Uptown neighborhood park (place on Pro Parks bond)
- Enact a short-term strategic tree planting program & a long-term greening strategy
- Re-open the Washington Street boat landing.

##### **Housing:**

- Office of Housing/City to monitor proportions of affordable housing.
- Investigate additional developer incentives for affordable housing
- Parking exemptions in exchange for low income units

## 8 Themes

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- Extend amenity credit fund TDR housing program
- Extend downtown 'no parking' requirements for residential development
- Implement parking maximums of 1 stall/bedroom
- Design departures in exchange for provision of leased space for residential services (e.g. daycare)
- Allow contributions to amenity credit fund for affordable housing in lieu of open space on site
- Turn Alaska Building into housing.
- Code changes should allow for more residential housing incentives.
- In order to meet the objective of concentrating growth and diversity:
- Build housing along with jobs...
- One downtown home for every four jobs.
- Priced and in proportion to jobholders' income.
- Build community places for residents and workers.

and how?

- Development credits.
- Remove institutional barriers.
- Public housing levies.
- Regional responsibility.

### Infrastructure:

- Target areas in South Lake Union for "under-grounding" of shared utilities (ex. public & fiber-optic.)
- Plan ahead for future needs
- Encourage schools downtown
- Address these Institutional Barriers to Fulfilling the Vision
- Inflexible SEATRAN standards - conduct public discussion
- Civility codes - reduce and interpret to encourage diversity
- Zoning and Land Use Code - use as a positive rather than a negative force
- Infrastructure as a response to growth - infrastructure should lead growth
- Teen curfews - downtown should be a "teen place" too
- Ordinance against street vendors - encourage street vending

### Mobility:

- Extend monorail line to Uptown (3 -10 years)
- Bus hub/intermodal transfer station near Key Arena (3 – 10 years)
- Increase and simplify multi-modal transit connections between Uptown/Belltown and other city urban centers.
- Connect Uptown (the 5<sup>th</sup> urban center) to Sound Transit light rail with mass transit in dedicated right of way

## 8 Themes

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Let's be bold and lid  
the Canyon of Death!

- Improve and simplify transit connections (e.g. bus)
- Extend waterfront trolley to serve new employment centers in Elliot corridor
- Plan transit service for new development
- Civic Center should expand accessibility study
- Reconstruct Prefontaine PI S
- AM and PM Traffic light settings should be changed for safer pedestrian crossing
- Support alley improvements
- Study the accessibility of downtown (loading zones, drop off zones, etc.) 1-3 years

### Parking:

- Uptown - Short term parking garages with street front uses (10 years)
- Flexible use of parking strategies that address new development needs while maintaining Transit Oriented Development.
- Implement Uptown/Belltown Parking Strategies:
- Change land use code to eliminate parking restrictions and allow shared parking
- Plan for short term parking structures with ground retail (Uptown)
- Retro-fit parking garages from Cherry north to Marion along 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. to allow for retail street frontage
- Enforcement of short term parking.
- Nickel parking in certain areas.

### Preservation:

- West Roy conservation district between 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue W and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue W, W Mercer Street and W Roy Street (10 years)

### Sustainability:

- Build to a silver Level L.E.E.D. standard paying attention to Sustainable Seattle Indicators & Cascade Neighborhood Council's Sustainable Design Guidelines

### View Protection:

- Enforce view corridors
- Review Belltown's 125' height limit from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue to west
- Preserve View of Space Needle from 4 Columns Park (today):

(Note: Consensus not reached on this recommendation.)

- Designated view corridor
- Highly valued neighborhood amenity
- Loss would greatly impact the only open space in Pike/Pine

# 8 Themes

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## Wayfinding (near term):

- Provide consistent level of improvements along Pike and Pine
- Pedestrian scale/level lighting (three globe with warm color)
- Benches
- Landscaping
- Clocks
- Maps/signage/information
- Restrooms
- Litter containers/maintenance
- Paving
- Awnings/marquees
- Wayfinding for Freeway Park

## Zoning/TDR and Bonus/Design Review:

- Implement the Denny Triangle Neighborhood Plan zoning changes . . . Now!
- Increase height limitations, Floor Area Ratio (FAR), and revise bonus/ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) limited for housing & open spaces
- Where permitting allows & desired, maximize residential zoning in South Lake Union (include considerable affordable housing)
- Complete/approve/implement neighborhood-specific design guidelines.
- Encourage building retro-fitting
- TDR or bonus for east-west accessibility.
- Zoning policies that promote mixed use.

## 2. Prepare a Center City Open Space Strategy

Develop an open space network (Where new spaces should go)

Modify Bonus and TDR provisions to encourage acquisition and development of new open spaces

Program existing and new open spaces

Manage key open spaces

## *Project Ideas from Forum*

## Open Space System and Green Infrastructure:

- **Acquire open spaces now!**
- Develop and implement open spaces and green streets as part of an overall system.
- Dedicate 20% of the land to ecological and social objectives; land that will provide for recreation, storm-water management, pedestrian linkages and biological edges. It articulates the ecosystem, is beautiful, and generates activity.
- Create a regional "green infrastructure" with urban forests, urban streams and a conservation zone east of Seattle/ Everett/Tacoma.
- Place emphasis on connectors first. Encourage ownership of the streets. Create the great street façade, salmon friendly streets and pedestrian connections.

## 8 Themes

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- Create great parks including the Olympic Sculpture Park and South Lake Union.
- Westlake Circle Anchor: Create an open space @ Westlake Circle to include city right-of-way w/ pedestrian friendly orientation.
- Protect and enhance open space opportunities on the waterfront. Daylight and recover the Elliott Bay shoreline as a biological edge.
- Develop an open space self-guided tour map.

And how?

- Coordinate development of open space and green infrastructure projects with storm-water quality improvement projects.
- Pass Pro Parks levy.
- Require an open space bond issue for urban centers.
- Take back alleys and roof tops.
- Regional responsibility.
- Expand TDR program to include additional neighborhoods and land uses.
- Extend T.D.R.'s beyond "within Block" restrictions to allow between block transfers within proximate areas (while respecting neighborhood wishes) - sending sites limited to housing & open spaces.

### 3. Develop a new long-term vision for the Waterfront

Take advantage of upcoming projects/opportunities

Preserve and enhance diverse and thriving habitats

Ensure public access, open space, views

Design to be the best for Seattle, and tourists will come

Deal with the Viaduct

Incorporate the diverse needs of industrial, transportation, public access, tourist and residential uses while recognizing the ecological significance of Elliot Bay.

*Project Ideas from Forum*

#### **Move ferry terminal south to King Street (Terminal 46):**

- Will improve traffic connection to regional system without cutting downtown from the waterfront
- Would link to I-5 better
- Better pedestrian connection to King Street Station
- Coleman Dock opened up as opportunity for development, open space, etc.
- Possible navigation problem with Port of Seattle activity?
- Need City, Port and WA State Ferries to co-plan for the new system to work
- Need comprehensive plan to build connections
- Include other development: park or commercial

## 8 Themes

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### Naturalistic beaches at connections:

- Already part of the Sculpture Park plan and being considered by the Aquarium
- Immunex
- Myrtle Edwards Park (“covization” and “estuarization” of park shoreline)
- Colman Dock (if ferry terminal is relocated)
- Washington Street boat landing
- Look for opportunities to create naturalistic features above the intertidal zone.
- Stormwater for ground water recharge through constructed wetland.
- Water reclamation in respect to Aquarium – use to water parks.
- Upland water and forest at Vine Street

### Alaskan Way Connections:

- Narrow Alaskan Way to two traffic lanes, widen promenade, and landscaped median.
- Continue the street section of Bell Street Pier area.
- Improve Alaskan Way bike lanes.
- FUND the Marion Street Overpass.
- Berth the Kalakala at Pier 48
- Extend the waterfront trolley south to stadiums and north to Interbay, Immunex and Seattle Center.
- Tunnel the viaduct in 10+ years

## 4. Make Connections across Gaps

Under/over I-5

Through the Viaduct (connect neighborhoods to water)

Between Lake Union and Elliott Bay

Between neighborhoods

### *Project Ideas from Forum*

#### Let's be bold and lid the Canyon of Death!

- Lid I-5 (between Denny Way and Madison Street):
- Reconnect downtown to the eastern neighborhoods.
- Do it in stages.
- Start inhabiting bridges.
- Improve connections over I-5: Evaluate safety, accessibility, aesthetics and maintenance. Develop area over and under the freeway (I-5)
- Lid the freeway over Columbia St
- Landscape improvements to Madison St and 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. over I-5
- Add sidewalk to both sides of Pine Street
- “Healing the Freeway Break” (Pike/Pine):



## 8 Themes

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### Alternative #1 (near term, 1-5 years):

- Expand the level grade of Four Columns Park to I-5 edge
- Create green edge and sound wall on north side of Pike/I-5
- Fill in corner of Pine/Boren to expand Boren Park
- Sound wall, sidewalk and green on the north side of Pine/I-5
- Convention Place development to lid in northwest corner of Pine/Boren over I-5 ramp
- Create sound wall and green on south side of Pine, west of Boren

### Alternative #2 (long term, 5 years+):

- Provide key open space for Pike/Pine and Denny Triangle on freeway lid between Pike and Pine Streets. Incorporate Four Columns/Boren Park and Terry Street end at I-5
- Optional: Include parking structure below open space in portion of lid
- Add sound wall and sidewalk/green edge on north side of Pine
- Provide clear connections from 9<sup>th</sup> and Terry Green Streets into new open space park

### Area along Pike and Pine Streets between 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenues:

- This is “front porch” for the city – need community center/gathering place (long term)
- Rehabilitate and acquire Nimmer Building at Second and Pike (today)
- Need more “eyes on the street” i.e., more housing (Near term)
- Redevelop/acquire parking lot at Second and Pike for mixed-use (today)
- Fix streets (near term):
  - Street trees
  - Pedestrian lights
  - Sidewalk repair
- McDonalds being redeveloped by HRG (today)
- Parking lot at north side of Pine at Second – private development in process (today)
- Emphasize good storefront/retail commercial at street level (today)
- Encourage as much housing as possible (near term)
- Bike parking – put lockers in area (included in HRG McDonalds project) (today)
- Post Office (near term): Investigate redevelopment feasibility:
  - Ownership
  - Mixed-use with space for Post Office
  - More street level activity

## 8 Themes

### Potlatch Trail

Design and implement the Potlatch Trail between the waterfront and Lake Union via Seattle Center and link to other systems:

- Connect to Alaskan Way bike trail
- Connect to Belltown trails. Complete Belltown loop (2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and add 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue)

Roy Street underpass

### Mercer Corridor

- Public/private funding for design. Complete within one year using existing data.
- Priority to Pedestrian crossing/over/under @ Mercer & Valley. Coordinate timeline w/ South Lake Union Park
- Broad Street study.
- Continue to encourage & promote South Lake Union Beautification Foundation's Mercer Portal Greening Project

### Westlake Boulevard

A pedestrian oriented boulevard between downtown & South Lake Union Park offering 24/7 mix of uses – allowing sufficiently for IC traffic and transit

Streetscape Amenities:

1. retail
2. pedestrian scale
3. lighting
4. friendly & safe
5. artwork
6. outdoor furniture
7. Animated - vitality

### Renovation of King Street Station

The top priority identified by all three South Downtown neighborhoods was the renovation of King Street Station. This National Historic Landmark is surrounded by more than \$1billion of development and investment, yet it languishes due to a gap of \$20 million out of its \$43 million renovation budget.

### South Downtown Connections

- Housing or other mixed use developments on the surface parking lots between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues and Washington street in the Chinatown/International District.
- The development of the North Kingdome Parking Lot.
- Improvements to the Occidental Corridor
- E-3 busway trail
- Completion of all SR 519 phases 1, 2 and 3.
- Mountain to Sound Greenway (3 to 5 years)

## 8 Themes

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### Neighborhood Connections

- Policy direction for Denny Way. Provide more pedestrian friendly N-S / E-W connections
- Pedestrian Connection with Denny Triangle (today):
- Maintain (do not sell) Terry Street end at I-5 as open space
- Continue Terry Street pedestrian route through Convention Place development
- Gateway trail at North Capitol Hill
- Use Library and the Civic Center as catalyst for improving public space connections between other public amenities
- Interdepartmental coordination for development of area at 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. and James Street.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> and Yesler need design development oversight to ensure NAB plan implemented.
- Make improvements to Yesler St around overpass
- Provide continued street median on 1<sup>st</sup> Ave. from Pioneer Square north
- Accessibility in downtown (money for ramps and sidewalks).
- Sandwich board regulations and enforcement (priority to pedestrian space).
- Internet communications on streets.
- One pedestrian-oriented street in downtown.

### Transit/Light Rail

- Taxi ordinance (rate structure).
- Maintain and expand downtown ride-free zone.
- Light rail ride-free zone.
- Fare integration with existing monorail and trolley.
- Secure funding for light rail to Northgate
- Light rail bike parking.
- Westlake monorail/light rail connection.
- Gold line
- Light rail to Denny Regrade/Seattle Center/Uptown (long-term)
- Additional private ferries (Lake Union and Elliot Bay)
- Capitalize on 3<sup>rd</sup> Av. Transit changes to implement alluring public amenities
- 60% Single occupancy vehicle (non-commute)

## Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

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The Mayor and four City Council members were present on Saturday morning to listen to presentations by the work groups. Mayor Paul Schell and Council Members Jan Drago, Peter Steinbrueck, Nick Licata and Richard Conlin then shared their thoughts on the work of the Forum:

### Mayor Paul Schell

In the long term, Lake Union and Elliot Bay are our major open spaces. The City is headed in the direction of creating a system of interconnected delightful open spaces that reflect their neighborhoods and offer users different experiences. We have a good start and need to make the connections and leverage as many private dollars as possible to create the system of connected open spaces.

The idea of taking a step back and looking at converting Pier 56 into a multi-modal transportation

terminal that has a direct link to SR 519 has merit.

Although the Port of Seattle is not considering this possibility, we

should think ahead as to how Pier 46 functions as a gateway to the city. King Street Station and Colman Dock are two major civic gateways to Seattle and need much improvement.

25 years ago, a lot of public money was dedicated to studying how the Viaduct could be removed. The Viaduct does have serious structural issues. However, people in West Seattle and Magnolia consider the Viaduct to be a crucial transportation link for their neighborhoods. We need to find ways to create access for them before taking down the Viaduct.

All of these ideas are possible but they need constituencies. We also must address the fear of change. There have been significant changes in the past that were not positive. **Voluntary citizen involvement and support are crucial to pursuing these ideas.**

**"Congestion can be our friend."** It's with us and we might as well learn to love it, find a way to enjoy it, do what we have to do to maintain our economic structure and give people options to the car. We also need to learn that it's not bad being messy. **Serendipity is not bad. It's not bad being a bit congested. It's what a city is all about.**

18-hour Center City: Perhaps keep retail stores and the Pike Place Market can stay open later until 8:00 or 9:00 pm, enabling people to go downtown and stay later.

The Potlatch Trail is underway. An interdepartmental team is focusing on it.

All of these ideas are possible  
but they need constituencies.

## Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

Someone mentioned the possibility for extending the Waterfront Trolley to serve Seattle Center and maybe South Lake Union.

Westlake Circle is a good idea as well as considering Westlake Avenue as a great street in the heart of the city with open space at where it bends.

Terry Avenue has real potential as a rail or tram corridor. The tracks are already there, utilities won't have to be relocated, and it runs right into the Convention Center.

Consider Terry Avenue as a rail transit corridor and Westlake Avenue as the grand walking boulevard.

# Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

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## Councilmember Jan Drago

In the 1980s, the major theme for downtown was that it was a series of fragile neighborhoods. By 1989 the City recognized downtown as a neighborhood. That was really the beginning. Another major theme was housing. Downtown livability depends on how it accommodates residents with adequate housing opportunities. A major theme for the 1990s was the 24-hour downtown.

All of these are now happening. Downtown is a series of neighborhoods. **More people are living or wanting to live downtown.** These are creating the challenges being addressed at the Forum.

It appears that the main theme of the Forum is the greening of downtown. **As more people live downtown, the need for green space increases. Green open space is important for making a dense downtown livable.**

Another theme of the Forum was the importance of connections between places and corridors for mobility.

These themes have emerged from our vision for the city. **We have a clear vision and now implementation is a matter of timing.**

Her focus will shift from housing to greening the downtown. We have some opportunities for greening including South Lake Union Park, extending Myrtle Edwards Park to Broad Street, the Olympic Sculpture Park, the renovation of Waterfront Park, and extending Victor Steinbrueck Park.

Two ideas high on her list are the renovation of the King Street Station clock and improving Occidental Avenue as a pedestrian corridor.

# Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

## Councilmember Peter Steinbrueck

**What is important here is the evolution of the city and its continuing urbanization.** What we've seen in downtown and the Center City since the 1960s is a significant urbanization. Downtown was more of neighborhood in the 1960s with many lower income residents. Subsequent commercial high-rise development displaced many residents but also revitalized downtown and avoided flight to the suburbs. This was followed by revitalization of the retail core to compete with the suburbs.

We are still lacking housing in downtown. We need to balance housing, open space and employment growth in downtown. This will require aggressive strategies and political will. We are applying vision and forethought to being proactive about the urbanization trend.

**The challenge is to envision our urban core as a whole and complete neighborhood** that is 24-hour, vibrant, dense with open space and a mix of housing, and less reliant on the single occupancy vehicle. The strategies that address these issues are interrelated.

Looking forward to the continuing dialogue and how the ideas of the Forum translate into strategies that may be implemented.



# Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

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## Councilmember Nick Licata

**We are dealing with a metropolis. A metropolis like a living organism that grows, contracts, and decays.** There is an imbalance created by areas that decline while others grow. The challenge lies in how to transform those areas in the urban core that are decaying into areas of growth.

**We have the choice to create consensus or lapse into fragmentation.** Politics drives design and challenges us to recognize where there is the potential for consensus and how to gather resources for accomplishing our objectives.

**A recurrent theme of the Forum is quality of life in the Center City.** Contributors to quality of life include parks and open space, pedestrian activity, affordable housing, 18 hours of retail and entertainment activity, and view corridors. These are some of the common elements we can agree on and our challenge is how to realize them.

We have funding mechanisms through City, State and Federal levels for encouraging how our metropolis grows.

Clocks are a great idea. Perhaps the new City Hall should have an outdoor clock.

Regulation is a powerful tool for guiding development. Some regulations could be less restrictive. We need to understand their appropriate use.

Some regulatory devices, such as taxation of auto use, are beyond the City's jurisdiction and would have to be addressed at the State level. Clear goals and coalition building are necessary before attempting changes here.

The City does bring issues before the legislature in Olympia. It is important to have support of these issues, however.

Important steps towards improving the Center City include the Pro-parks levy, increasing housing, and more open space. Better coordination of efforts within the City government is also needed.

# Civic Leaders Listen and Respond...

## Councilmember Richard Conlin

How do we make the connection between people with big picture concepts and ordinary people. Our city in many ways is not designed to help ordinary people make connections between neighborhoods. **We need to focus on translating our ideas so that ordinary people can relate them to their experience of the city.**

### Three themes:

- **Seattle is not about being world-class for tourists. It's about developing our own character so that on every corridor you know you are in Seattle.** Tourists will come because we have that character.
- We need to respect the neighborhood plans and build on them.
- We need big dreams but we also must pay attention to the small details that make dreams happen.

### Two core concepts:

We have a new concept of downtown. Downtown now stretches from South Lake Union and Uptown to Pioneer Square, the International District and the Stadiums. It also stretches from the hills to the water. I-5 is no longer its boundary. Pike/Pine and First Hill are becoming part of downtown. Need a lid between Denny Way and Madison. Perhaps even between the University bridge and Jackson Street?

Unity: How do we build seamless connections? Systems thinking, linkages, identifying gaps, finding ways to activate spaces between neighborhoods such as those between the International District and Pioneer Square. We need to get people walking and activate the spaces between neighborhoods. **Every space counts in downtown and needs to be examined for the right fit.**

### Seven questions:

1. How do we make downtown human scaled?
2. How can we make governments work together?
3. How do we then create partnership between government, the community and the private sector?
4. How do we get the media engaged and excited about this?
5. How do we get people to consider that what is present today may change in the future?
6. How do we avoid the problem of getting out too far in front of the citizenry with our ideas?
7. How do we make our ideas pencil out? How do we balance the short-term costs with the long-term benefits we may gain?

By answering these questions it may be possible to move in the direction of our vision for community, connection, human scale, and a city of people.

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*A Center City Urban Design and Implementation Strategy*

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